

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Propertyhistoric name Piedmont Mill Historic Districtother names/site number 033-5224**2. Location**street & number 1709 Alean Road [Route 687] not for publication n/acity or town Boones Mill vicinity Xstate Virginia code VA county Franklin code 067 zip code 24065**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide x locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined eligible for the National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined not eligible for the National Register

_____ removed from the National Register

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

____ other (explain): _____

Piedmont Mill Historic District

Franklin County, Virginia

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) n/a

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Agriculture/Subsistence</u>	Sub: <u>processing</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>single dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>secondary structure</u>
<u>Commerce</u>	<u>department store</u>
<u>Government</u>	<u>post office</u>
<u>Health Care</u>	<u>dentist office</u>
<u>Transportation</u>	<u>bridge</u>
<u>landscape</u>	<u>retaining wall</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>vacant</u>	Sub: <u>not in use</u>
<u>other</u>	<u>storage</u>
<u>landscape</u>	<u>retaining wall</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

no style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, concrete
roof metal
walls wood
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Industry

Transportation

Period of Significance c.1866 – 1963

Significant Dates c.1866; 1929; 1936

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) n/a

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

_____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Piedmont Mill Historic District

Franklin County, Virginia

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 5.13 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing

1 17 601762 4105880

Datum from 1927 quadrangle

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Michael J. Pulice, architectural historian & John R. Kern, historian

organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Roanoke Regional Office date September, 2008

street & number 1030 Penmar Ave. SE telephone 540-857-7586

city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24013

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Multiple - see label sheet

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**Piedmont Mill Historic District
Franklin County, Virginia**

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7. Resource Description

Summary

The Piedmont Mill district is located in north-central Franklin County, roughly between the communities of Wirtz and Burnt Chimney, and north of the courthouse town of Rocky Mount. The district occupies a narrow strip of land, approximately 1000 feet in length, along Maggoodee Creek, at its confluence with Mollie Branch. Maggoodee Creek flows into the Blackwater River, a major tributary of Smith Mountain Lake, about two miles to the southwest. The Piedmont Mill, at the south end of the district, is the primary resource, situated at the intersection of Routes 687 (Alean Road) and 691 (Bonbrook Road), about six-tenths of a mile north of the intersection of Routes 687 and 697 (Wirtz Road). Route 687 crosses through the mid-section of the district via a one-lane metal truss bridge manufactured in Roanoke, Virginia, by Roanoke Iron and Bridge Works, in 1929. The bridge is a contributing resource in the district. Other contributing resources associated with the mill are the earthen mill race with concrete sluice and intact head gate, and the concrete mill dam, rebuilt in 1936. In addition, there are two two-story weatherboarded frame dwellings, both built within about a decade of the mill; and behind the northernmost dwelling, identified here-in as the "upper miller's house," is a pole barn dating to the circa 1920s period. The mill and the dwellings all retain most of their original exterior cladding and six-over-six wood window sashes. It is hoped that historic designation will facilitate preservation grants and other financial assistance for rehabilitation of the historic structures in the district.

Detailed Description

The most significant resource in the district is the commercial corn and flour mill historically known as Piedmont Mill and later as Clements' Mill, constructed about 1866 on Maggoodee Creek. It is a three-story (plus the basement) weatherboarded frame structure, set upon an uncoursed fieldstone foundation, with an early, if not original, one-story, gable-roofed ell; a later, substantial, one-story shed, now clad with corrugated sheet metal, across the rear elevation; and a small shed addition housing the gears next to the waterwheel. The footprint of the original three-story mill structure measures 36 ½ feet by 30 feet 9 inches. On the east elevation, on each floor level, are two six-over-six wood sash windows. The attic, which functioned as the fourth floor, housing roller equipment, is lighted by a single six-over six-sash window centered below the gable. This fenestration configuration is repeated on the west elevation. The north elevation has two windows on the first floor level only. All the window sash and casings are painted red. The mill's three-story section has a standing-seam metal roof, also painted red. On the north and east elevations are the main entrances, which both have loading docks, covered by shed roofs. The metal overshot waterwheel measuring four feet in width and approximately thirteen feet in diameter, the millstones, roller mill equipment and 1930s hammer mill equipment are still in place. Some modern equipment from the 1980s is also present. Below the mill, along the creek bank and wrapping around to the waterwheel, is a substantial retaining wall of uncoursed fieldstone, reaching a maximum height of about seven to eight feet. It is identified herein as a *contributing structure*. The interior of the mill is filled with antique milling equipment, most of it unmoved from its original position, as well as some later improved devices. The building is not currently in use, except for some storage. Overall it is in fair condition— structurally sound but slowly deteriorating.

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The mill race is earthen and the sluice is formed of poured concrete. The head gate is concrete and steel. The poured concrete dam extends across Maggoodee Creek, about 600 feet north of the mill.

Situated directly across Alean Road from the mill, the lower miller's house faces south towards the mill. It is a two-story frame house on continuous, coursed fieldstone foundation, with hand-made brick end chimney, a brick interior stove flue piercing the V-crimp sheet metal roof, and concrete block stove flue abutted to the end chimney and held in place by metal straps. The house footprint measures 36 feet 4 inches by 22 feet. It has a fairly recently constructed, but unfinished one-story rear ell, a full-length front porch, original weatherboards, and aluminum shutters. Circular sawn balloon framing can be clearly seen where weatherboards are missing on the back (north) wall. Cut nails are predominate throughout the building, which is vacant and in generally poor condition. An uncoursed fieldstone retaining wall with concrete coping surrounds the property on the south side. The wall is identified herein as a *contributing structure*. The general store was located in the first floor of the building. The first floor was also occupied by the Piedmont Post Office from 1893-1898, the Alean Post Office from 1898-1906, and for a time, by a dentist's office. The second floor always served as a dwelling.

Situated directly behind the lower miller's house, across Alean Road from the mill, the upper miller's house also faces south towards the mill, and overlooks the mill dam, downhill to the east. The two-story frame house has a single hand-made brick end chimney on the west elevation and a medium-pitch side gable roof covered with V-crimp sheet metal. The house footprint measures 18 feet 3 inches by 16 feet. The chimney is 5 feet wide and sits on a coursed fieldstone foundation, while the house rests on intermittent fieldstone piers. The house framing lumber is circular sawn, fastened with cut nails, as are the weatherboards and slender cornerboards. The corner posts are 6 inches square, while the common studs are full two-by-fours. The front has a centered front door and a window opening on each floor on the east side of the door only. There other window openings are the east elevation, one on each floor level. The ell appears to have been part of the house's original construction. It consists of a single room connected by a covered area with a wall on the east side, but open on the west elevation. The building is vacant and in generally poor condition. Forming a semicircle around the front of the house is a retaining wall of uncoursed fieldstone, reaching a maximum height of about 4 ½ feet. The wall is identified herein as a *contributing structure*.

The circa 1920s pole barn is abutted to the rear (north) elevation of the upper miller's house rear ell. The poles are unhewn round logs with the bark removed. The shed roof is covered with corrugated sheet metal.

An embanked, one-room, frame, utilitarian building with flush vertical board cladding, located diagonally across from the mill at the intersection of Alean and Bonbrook roads, measures 12 feet by 20 ½ feet. The framing lumber measures a full 2 inches by 4 inches. On the east exterior wall is a blue sign with the Ford Motor Company logo and the words "Tractors" and "Equipment."

The one-lane, 4-span, steel pony truss bridge with single, vertical channel posts, set on poured concrete piers, abutments, wings, and seats, was erected over Maggodee Creek by the Virginia State Highway Commission in 1929. The trusses are 71 feet long; the concrete-covered wood deck is 12 feet, 9 inches wide. The overall length of

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the bridge is 129 feet. The top chords and end posts are steel I-beams. The bottom chords and diagonals are two angles connected with stay plates. The truss was manufactured in the nearby city of Roanoke in 1929, using steel made in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. In April 2005, bridge inspectors found the 1929 bridge to be in “serious” condition, and VDOT was forced to close the bridge to traffic. Indeed, a close look reveals that many of its steel parts are severely rusted. A current proposal, supported by both Franklin County and VDOT, calls for replacement of the bridge in-kind, with a new one-lane metal truss structure of similar design.

A frame utility building with corrugated sheet metal cladding is situated directly across Alean Road from the mill and adjacent to the one-lane steel truss bridge. It is constructed over, and partly supported by the poured-concrete mill sluice. It has a low-pitch gable roof and a small shed addition on the west elevation, all covered with corrugated sheet metal. Its framing, of modern dimensional lumber, is exposed on the interior. The interior is well lighted by a variety of wooden window types, painted a dark red.

A non-contributing garage/shed, a timber frame structure, is built on stone foundation of an earlier structure, 20 feet by 18 feet, with vertical board cladding, gable roof covered with green sheet metal, and concrete floor.

Inventory:

- 1) Piedmont Mill, c.1866. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0001 (Other DHR ID 033-0406)
- 2) Piedmont Mill stone retaining wall. Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0002
- 3) Mill race with head gate and sluice, c.1866; rebuilt 1936. Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0003
- 4) Mill dam, c.1866; rebuilt 1936. Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0004
- 5) Lower miller’s house, general store, post office, dentist office. ca.1870s. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0005
- 6) Lower miller’s house stone retaining wall. Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0006
- 7) Upper miller’s house, circa late 1860s. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0007
- 8) Upper miller’s house stone retaining wall. Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0008
- 9) Pole barn, 3-bay, circa 1920s. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0009
- 10) Frame utilitarian building. circa 1920s. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0010
- 11) Frame/corrugated sheet metal utility building. ca. 1950. Contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0011
- 12) Frame garage. circa 2000. Non-contributing building. DHR ID 033-5224-0012

13) Virginia Department of Transportation Bridge 6089, Route 687 (Alean Road) over Maggodee Creek.
Contributing structure. DHR ID 033-5224-0013 (Other DHR ID 033-5003)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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Archaeological potential

Because the mill and ancillary structures are located on high, well-drained landforms overlooking Maggodee Creek and its confluence with Mollie Branch, there seems to be excellent potential for prehistoric and earlier historic archaeological deposits throughout the district. Sites dating as far back as the Early Archaic period have been encountered in similar topography around the area. At this time, however, no subsurface remains have been recorded within the district.

8. Statement of Significance

Summary

The Piedmont Mill Historic District in Franklin County, Virginia contains the large water-powered Martin-Piedmont-Clements mill built around 1866, two dwellings from about the same period, and a steel pony truss bridge constructed in 1929. The district is eligible for historic designation under Criterion A, with the theme of Industry for its operation by the Martin family as the highest powered water-driven mill in Franklin County in 1870, and for its subsequent operation by the Clements family as a significant rural center of milling operations through the 1950s. Piedmont Mill is also eligible under Criterion A, with the theme of Transportation because the single lane steel pony truss bridge survives as an example of Virginia State Highway Commission standardized plans for metal truss bridges built in the 1920s and 1930s. The district is also eligible under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Engineering, because the mill, its associated structures, and the bridge each embody the distinctive designs, construction methods, engineering techniques, and materials of the periods during which they were built, and provide excellent opportunities for study and interpretation. Furthermore, as a rare intact collection of survivals, the resources provide excellent opportunities for study and interpretation. The period of significance begins in 1866, the approximate date of construction of the mill, and ends in 1963, when the mill closed.

Historical Background

Between the end of the Civil War and 1870 Albert G. Martin built a mill on Maggodee Creek in Franklin County, Virginia, a large flour and grist milling operation that became known as Piedmont Mill around World War I and was operated by the Benjamin Clements family from the 1920s into the 1960s. A steel I-beam single lane metal truss bridge constructed in 1929 continues to provide access to the small rural community.

Listed as a 31-year-old farmer in the 1850 Franklin County census, A. G. Martin purchased 148 acres on Maggodee Creek in 1853 for \$1,000. During the late 1850s building values on Martin's land remained constant at \$1,500. In 1860 the Franklin County census listed A. G. Martin as a miller with real estate valued at \$9,600 and personal property valued at \$3,000. In 1860 Martin headed a household including wife Georgiana and 21-year-old son John, also listed as a miller. In 1861 Albert Martin concluded purchase of a 40-acre "Mill Tract" and other parcels on Maggodee Creek for \$4,500. By 1866 and until 1870, building values on Martin's lands remained

constant at \$1,500 for the first purchase in the 1850s and now included buildings valued at \$4,650 for the Mill Tract. The 1870 Franklin County census listed A. G. Martin as miller with real estate valued at \$14,000 and personal property valued at \$2,000. In 1870 Martin's household no longer included son John, but John's younger brother Albert,

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then 22 years old, still lived with his parents and worked as a miller. These records indicate that Albert G. Martin worked as a miller on Maggoodee Creek by 1860, but that the larger mill on the 40-acre Mill Tract was not constructed until around 1866.¹

The 1870 census of industry listed 33 mills in Franklin County, including the two owned by A. G. Martin. Martin's larger Mill Tract flour and grist mill was capitalized at \$7,000, produced flour valued at \$6,000 and cornmeal valued at \$1,100 for the year, and generated 45 horsepower from its water-driven wheel. Only one other mill in the county had more capital investment, and none of the other mills generated as much water-driven horsepower.²

The 1880 census listed A. G. Martin as a farmer. His first wife had died, and A. G. was now married to Lucy, 21 years old, with three children aged 2, 1, and 4 months. By 1880 A. G.'s son Albert still worked as a miller and headed his own household with wife Mary, 28 years old, and three children aged 6 to 1. A. G. Martin suffered an accidental death in July 1886. Subsequent accounts reported that A. G. fell off his mill dam, died, and was buried on the hill overlooking the mill and his farm. A. G. Martin's property inventory and appraisal recorded the possessions of a prosperous farmer: a number of valuable horses as well as cattle, pigs, and sheep; harvested crops of corn, grain, and oats; farm equipment and machinery, wagons, blacksmith tools; household furnishings; and in keeping with Franklin County tradition, "3 stills and fixtures."³

In 1891 a suit, *Kerlin v. Martin Heirs*, resulted in the purchase by James E. Poteet for \$2,300 of 4 acres of land formerly owned by A. G. Martin on Maggoodee Creek, with the purchase recorded in 1896. In 1897 Hill's *Virginia State Directory* recorded J. E. Poteet as postmaster at Piedmont, and also recorded Poteet as a General Merchant at Piedmont. The same 1897 Virginia Directory continued to list A. G. Martin as owner and operator of the corn and flour mill in Bonbrook Township on Maggoodee Creek. So A. G. Martin's son continued to run the mill in 1897, but James E. Poteet owned the store and the post office there, and the locale was then known as Piedmont.⁴

By 1900 the Franklin County census listed James E. Poteet as a 39-year-old general merchant in Bonbrook Township, with his household including wife Amanda, 6 children, a niece, and a 27-year-old boarder who sold dry goods. By 1900 A. G. Martin's son no longer lived in Franklin County, but Poteet had acquired the original A. G. Martin Mill Tract, probably by 1917, when Hill's *Virginia Business Directory* listed Piedmont Milling Company as one of 16 flour and grist mills in Franklin County. J. E. Poteet lived in the Raleigh Court ward of Roanoke City by 1920, and he sold the Piedmont Mill property and adjacent lands in 1922/23.⁵

In 1923 Ben L. Clements bought a "tract of land lying on the Banks of Maggoodee Creek, known as the Piedmont Mill property." This was the mill property first owned and operated by A. G. Martin at the close of the Civil War, and then owned by J. E. Poteet around World War I. Ben Clements lived in Roanoke City in 1920, where,

employed as a woodworker, he headed a household including wife Viola Mae and 2 1/2-year-old son William. Around 1983 Ben's son William Clements remembered that his father had to buy a secondhand waterwheel for Piedmont mill and had to rebuild the mill dam three months after he began milling operations. Bill Clements reported that the mill was so important to the Piedmont community that neighbors lent his father money to rebuild

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the dam. Bill Clements remembered that Piedmont functioned as a small but thriving community during the early 1920s. In addition to Poteet's Piedmont General Store, the community had a blacksmith shop, the Piedmont Church of the Brethren, and the Piedmont Elementary School. The general store also housed the post office and a dentist's office where the dentist pulled teeth without painkillers. The Clements family ran the Piedmont General Store until 1925, but the school closed and the community dispersed by around 1930. In 1936 Ben Clements used 300 bags of cement to rebuild the wooden dam on Maggodee Creek, which had washed out again. The dam and mill race still survive to provide water to turn the mill wheel. After being "raised here in the mill helping my daddy," Bill Clements said he took over operation of the mill in 1940 at the age of 22 and continued operations until store-bought "baker's bread" replaced mill-ground flour for bread and he had to close the mill in 1963. Even after the mill closed, Bill Clements and his son Bill, Jr., continued to run Clements Tractor and Equipment Company into the 1980s.⁶

Herman Melton's excellent study, *Pittsylvania's Nineteenth-Century Grist Mills*, documents that water-powered grist mills constituted the earliest rural industry to flourish in Southside Virginia until around the Civil War. Eventually the technology associated with the development of railroads and the steam engine contributed to declining use of overshot waterwheel mills before World War I. But Melton concludes that while they operated, water-powered grist mills did more than process grain for local family tables. Rural mills served as community centers where adjacent country stores, churches, schools, and artisans such as blacksmiths and a few professionals such as dentists satisfied critical needs in isolated communities. The industrial technology that led to the decline of water-powered mills by the 20th century also led to the development of urban industrial centers such as Danville and Roanoke. Still, we can see that Piedmont Mill, begun by the Martin family in the mid-1800s, continued to provide vital rural community services to Franklin County residents along Maggodee Creek until the mid-1900s while the Clements family continued to operate the mill.⁷

In 1929 the Virginia State Highway Commission enhanced access to the rural community of Piedmont by building a single lane steel I-beam pony truss bridge over Maggodee Creek at Piedmont Mill. The Piedmont Bridge was constructed by the Roanoke Iron and Bridge Works, a company founded in Roanoke in 1915, with 236 employees by 1930.⁸

The Virginia Transportation Research Council report, *Survey of Metal Truss Bridges in Virginia*, states that metal truss bridge plans were standardized in Virginia after 1909. Plans in 1920 specified a 15-ton load capacity, and I-beam Pony Trusses began to replace fords or wooden bridges in many locations. Fifty-nine metal truss bridges were constructed in Virginia during the 1920s, and 65 were constructed during the 1930s. Fourteen metal truss bridges were constructed in the 1940s, and only 4 in the 1950s. The Virginia Transportation Research Council inventory published in 1997 recorded 4 metal truss bridges in Franklin County.⁹

The Piedmont Mill Bridge was erected in the late 1920s as part of Governor Harry Byrd's ambitious "program of progress" that promised to bring extensive improvements in public works to the people of Virginia. Thus the single-lane metal truss Piedmont Bridge has provided 80 years of vehicular access to the small rural mill

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community of Piedmont. The unusual combination of a circa 1870 mill and a 1929 single-lane metal truss bridge has served to sustain the resources now nominated as the Piedmont Mill Historic District. Seeking to preserve these resources, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors in 2006 resolved to ask the Commonwealth Transportation Board for "authorization for an 'in kind' replacement of Clements [Piedmont] Mill Bridge as a historically appropriate steel-span single-lane structure." This nomination documents the post-Civil War agricultural industrial heritage and the post-World War I transportation heritage that have combined to constitute and preserve the Piedmont Mill Historic District.¹⁰

Endnotes

1. Franklin County, Virginia, U.S. Manuscript Census, Population, 1850, 1860, 1870. Franklin County Circuit Court, Grantee Index 1853-1861; Franklin County Land Books 1856, 1861, 1866, and 1870. Land Book records are on microfilm in the Franklin County Circuit; the film is sometimes impossible to read, and not all years are available.
2. Franklin County, Virginia, U.S. Manuscript Census, Industry, 1870. Microfilmed Industrial Census records for Franklin County are indecipherable to 1880. Herman Melton's *Pittsylvania's [Virginia] Nineteenth-Century Grist Mills* (1991), 169-170, lists 23 mills in Pittsylvania County in 1880; none of these mills generated as much horsepower as was produced by A. G. Martin's "Mill Tract" mill in 1870.
3. Franklin County Census, Population, 1880. Franklin County Circuit Court, Will Book 20, 425-432, 492-495. Mike Hudson, "Clements Mill," special to the *Franklin News-Post*, clipping, circa 1983. Franklin County Death Records, 1853-1896.
4. Franklin County Deed Book 46, 283. J. L. Hill, *Virginia State Directory* (1897), Richmond, 452, 456, 457.
5. Franklin County Census, Population, 1900. *Hill's Virginia Business Directory*, 1917, Richmond, Virginia, 389. Franklin County Deed Book, 72, 427. Roanoke City Census, 1920.
6. Roanoke City, Virginia, Census, 1920. Franklin County Census, Population, 1930. Hudson, "Clements Mill," *Franklin News-Post*, circa 1983. Franklin County Deed Book 72, 427; 74, 31.
7. Herman Melton, *Pittsylvania's Nineteenth-century Grist Mills*, 233. It is interesting to note that for their own lives the Clements family move from Roanoke City to Piedmont Mill reversed the general trend to urban industrialization that ended the era of water-powered mills. In fact, the Clements family milling operation from the 1920s to the 1960s sustained the rural life of the Piedmont Mill community.
8. Truss Bridge Survey and Inventory Form, Rec. #206, Dan Deibler, July 1975, Structure #6089, Virginia Department of Transportation, November 1995. Ann B. Miller and Kenneth M. Clark, *Survey of Metal Truss Bridges in Virginia*, Virginia Transportation Research Council, 1997. George B. Stevens, *An Economic and Social Survey of Roanoke County*, University of Virginia, 1930, 70.
9. Miller and Clark, *Survey of Metal Truss Bridges in Virginia*, 8, 10, 15, 52-A.

10. Sharon K. Tudor, Clerk, Franklin County Board of Supervisors, to Greg A. Whirley, Department of Transportation, Interim Commissioner, May 5, 2006.

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Virginia Truss Bridge Survey and Inventory Form. Salem District, Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation, 1975. Rec. #206.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary is shown on the accompanying Franklin County tax parcel map. It encompasses the 5.13-acre parcel containing the Piedmont-Clements Mill and associated structures referred to as Franklin County tax map 03500, parcel 00301, and the Virginia Department of Transportation steel truss bridge no.6089, Route 687, over Maggodee Creek.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated district encompasses *only* the parcel containing the Piedmont-Clements Mill and associated structures, and the Virginia Department of Transportation steel truss bridge no.6089, Route 687.

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Photographs

All photographs of:

Piedmont Mill Historic District, Franklin County, Virginia [DHR ID 033-5224]

Date: February, 2006 and August, 2008

Photographer: Michael J. Pulice

Format: color digital images, archivally printed in grayscale

Location of originals: DHR archives, Richmond, VA

1. Piedmont Mill, facing southwest.
2. Piedmont Mill, facing southeast.
3. Foreground: 1929 truss bridge over Maggodee Creek, facing north; background: circa 1950 utility building and mill dam beyond.
4. Mill race and head gate, facing northwest.
5. Left to right: 1929 truss bridge; circa 1950 utility building spanning the mill race; Piedmont Mill; lower miller's house; upper miller's house; facing south-southwest.
6. Left to right: circa 1920 utilitarian building; circa 2000 garage; upper miller's house; lower miller's house; facing north
7. Upper miller's house, facing northwest.